

Remarks

It is respectfully submitted that Itoh (U.S. Pat. 6,034,785) may not be applied as a prior art reference in this case. Itoh was filed in the U.S. on April 21, 1998.

This application claims priority from and is a continuation of U.S. Pat. No. 6,195,101 having a filing date of April 6, 1998. This application's April 6, 1998 priority date is before the filing date of Itoh. Under MPEP 2136.03 the Itoh reference's foreign priority date cannot be used against this application. Therefore, the Itoh reference is not properly cited against the subject application, and Applicants respectfully request the withdrawal of the 35 U.S.C. § 103 rejection.

In view of the foregoing, Applicants respectfully submit that all of the pending claims are in condition for allowance. Accordingly, a Notice of Allowance is respectfully requested. If the Examiner has any questions concerning the present amendment, the Examiner is kindly requested to contact the undersigned at (408) 749-6900, ext. 6924. If any additional fees are due in connection with filing this amendment, the Commissioner is also authorized to charge Deposit Account No. 50-0805 (Order No. ROXIP228C). A duplicate copy of the transmittal is enclosed for this purpose.

Respectfully submitted,
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